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**A RETROSPECT**  
**1866-1916**  
**RICE & HUTCHINS, INC.**

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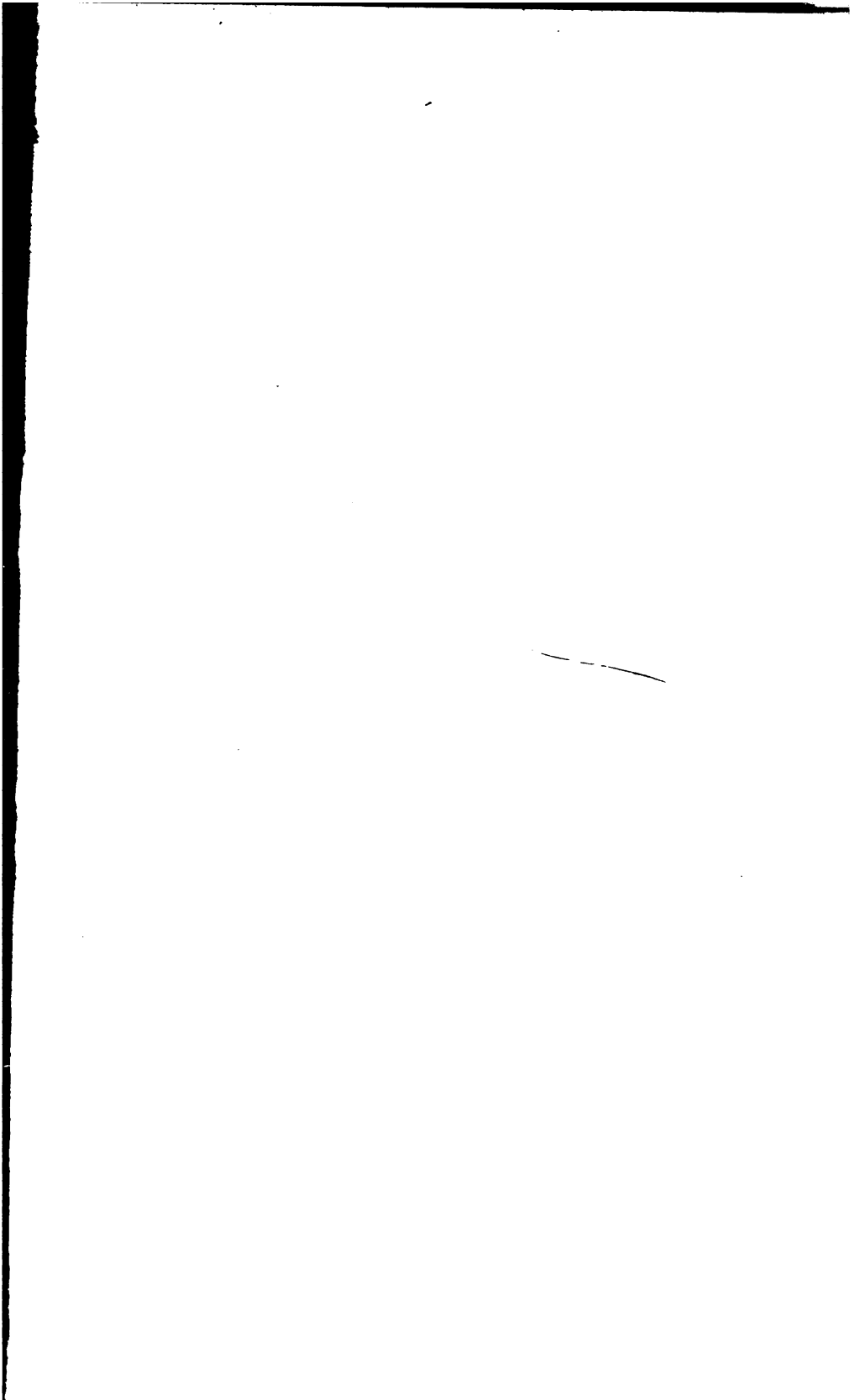


GIFT OF  
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PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS

1906-1919









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*W. D. Rice*

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# A RETROSPECT

1866—1916

RICE & HUTCHINS, INC.



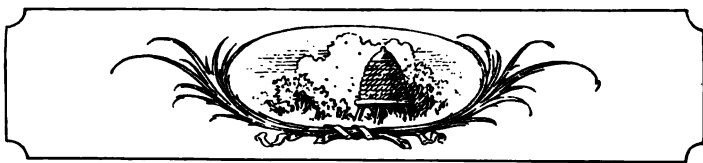
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## CHAPTER I

**H**ISTORY has ever been written in terms of a man. Great events which have marked the progress of civilization have had origin in the ideas of men and development and fulfilment in the courage and power of men to make these ideas real. Whether we search the record of national growth, of world politics, of religion, or science, history does not vary. Men have thought; development and progress have followed.

So it is with the history of industry and commerce — a history the most significant and important pages of which have been written during the last fifty years and are being written today. Modern and romantic, such history is at times almost startling in its record of remarkable visions of men — their power to see clearly across the span of decades to come, their knowledge of men, their ability to plan for the convenience and comfort of future generations, their spirit of daring and their faith in their own convictions enabling them to overcome obstacles, to stand four-square in the face of skepticism and ridicule, and to develop their dreams into actualities.

In the history of civilization — of the world's progress during the last fifty years — the one most important factor is, undoubtedly, the enormous development and application of the means of production and of commerce. Certainly it has been the greatest factor in the

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improvement of the living conditions of man. And it must be recorded that the great men of the period have been the men of business — the pioneers in the expansion of world commerce to its present high state.

As with other industries, so it has been with the shoe industry in the United States during this comparatively brief period. It has had remarkable development. From a crude beginning, it has reached a period of splendid efficiency. It has had its pioneers and its leaders. Its progress has been due to the clearly defined and sound ideas of thinking men and the capacity of these men to plan well, build firmly, ignore difficulties, and press forward steadily toward a definite goal.

And high among these men stands the name of William Ball Rice, founder of the present business of Rice & Hutchins, Inc., a pioneer and leader in the development of the shoe business of the world — a thorough and successful business man.

Rice & Hutchins, Inc., observe this year the fiftieth anniversary of their history — looking backward from their present high station over this remarkable half century of such tremendous significance in the shoe industry, a period of progress in which Mr. Rice played so important a part. Fifty years ago supplying a few merchants from a small factory ; today supplying the markets of the world with shoes for the whole family. Such is the record of expansion of the business which he founded. The story of its development is the history of the man.



## CHAPTER II

**I**N the annals of American history, those years immediately following the war of rebellion are designated as the period of reconstruction. The term is proper in relation to national growth and the bringing back into harmony of national units torn asunder by the bitterness of civil strife.

However, when applied to the industry and commerce of that time, the term "reconstruction" cannot be called correct, nor does it convey to our minds a true picture of conditions as they actually were. The period was in no way one of reconstruction in business. It was a period more primitive—really one of formation and organization. There had been nothing in the nature of well established, efficient business system as we



Building at 30 Hanover Street, Boston, where Rice & Hutchins opened their first offices in 1866. At the right may be seen the historic old American House, one of Boston's famous hotels, recently closed. The Hanover and Pearl Street districts were the wholesale shoe centers of Boston in 1866. Up to that time, the shoe trade had been located largely where the present market district is. The center of the trade has moved steadily southward.

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know it today, nor were there even indications or suggestions of the energetic age of specialization and standardization of business which was to follow so quickly.

Business had been, in fact, in the dark ages. Processes were crude and conditions were chaotic. The age of helpful invention was in its infancy. Morse's telegraph was but recently started. Bell had yet to perfect the telephone. Edison was a youth. Marshall Field had just migrated West, destined to develop the greatest retail business in the United States in a city of which he called New York the seaport. The



After leaving Hanover Street, Rice & Hutchins occupied offices on this site, at 95 Pearl Street, Boston, 1868-1872. A large majority of the wholesale shoe houses were located on Pearl Street at that time.

application of steam to industry was only developing. Railroad travel was slow; trans-oceanic voyages were tedious. The Atlantic cable was laid successfully in 1866. North and South were torn wide apart, and Northern business men and methods were discredited in the South. West was from the East almost a country apart.

Within the shoe industry itself there were up to this time no particular signs of great

promise for the future. Production was slow and cumbersome. The days of rapid and highly efficient machinery were yet to come. There were factories, small and limited in output, but the itinerant shoemaker still enjoyed flourishing business.

If shoe manufacturing processes were crude, the



First factory of Rice & Hutchins — old Middlesex — Marlboro, Mass. Built in 1865 and acquired by Rice & Hutchins ten years later. The main building was 60 × 40 feet, to which an ell 33 × 26 was added in 1879. This factory at first made women's polkas; afterwards, men's work shoes. It was destroyed by fire in 1884.

method of distribution was equally so. The middleman, or jobber, was the dominant figure. The manufacturer made shoes for the jobber and stamped them as the jobber's own product. The jobber controlled the trade of the retailer to such an extent that the manufacturer hardly had courage to sell direct to a retailer for fear of offending the jobbers, with attendant loss of the jobbers' business. The identity, the individuality of the manufacturer were lost—and with his own consent.



Such were the conditions in general when William B. Rice and Horatio H. Hutchins, his friend, a clothier of Hudson, Mass., join-



When the Boston fire occurred in 1872, its start was on Summer Street, almost one block from the building occupied by Rice & Hutchins, No. 125. This building was destroyed, and when rebuilt, the offices and wholesale stock of Rice & Hutchins were located there until 1900. The Summer Street district became the wholesale shoe center of Boston in the years following the Boston fire. There were no wholesale shoe houses on Summer, High, Lincoln, or Devonshire Streets in 1866, but in 1881 there were one hundred and seventy-three such houses on Summer Street, sixty-four on High Street, twenty-one on Lincoln Street, and eighteen on Devonshire Street. Pearl Street had dropped to fifty-nine and Hanover Street to fifty-five.

ing in partnership, established the business of Rice & Hutchins in 1866. To the average man, such times might seem hardly propitious for success in a new enterprise. Yet the very nature of the times, the chaotic condition of the industry itself, offered to strong men — men of ideas — opportunity for constructive work and the building up of permanent success. To no less a degree was there opportunity for positive service to humanity, to be expressed in improvement of conditions under which men lived and in the means of living itself.

Time has demonstrated that Mr. Rice was truly an opportunist; but first he was a


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keen analyst. He took conditions as he found them, and on them he constructed plans for the future which, in the history of business, were to be world wide in their significance.



Before the Boston fire of 1872 had burned itself out, Rice & Hutchins, having lost their offices and a large stock of shoes, were established in these temporary quarters, at Bedford and Columbia Streets. Here they continued until their old building, at 125 Summer Street, was rebuilt.



## CHAPTER III

**T**HAT William B. Rice should be found launching out for himself in the shoe industry was altogether natural. Men, we are told, are, for the most part, creatures of heredity and environment, traveling their paths between these two high walls and meeting success or failure in the degree to which they absorb what is good and overcome what is weak or troublesome in both.

Mr. Rice was the son of a shoemaker, Obed Rice, and was born in a shoe-making town. Moreover, he was not born to affluence, but in his early years learned the lesson that application of energy and resourcefulness are essential to a life which is to be successful.

Edmund Rice, the first of his ancestors to come to America, had settled in Sudbury, Massachusetts, in 1639, an immigrant from Berkhamstead, Hertford, England. Later he removed to Marlboro, the town where William was born, and which, in late years,



Factory at Warren, Me., operated by Rice & Hutchins for many years and discontinued in 1913. Low-priced shoes for men and work shoes for boys were made in this factory.

has been the scene of so many of the manufacturing achievements of Rice & Hutchins. William's mother, Sarah Ball, was a descendant of the Ball family who came from England in early colonial days and settled in Watertown. Her father was a harness maker. From his immediate ancestry, therefore, it is not surprising to find in young William Rice a liking for leather.



Factory at North Easton, Mass., operated by Rice & Hutchins, 1886-1894, then removed to Rockland, Mass. Men's high-grade shoes were made in this factory.

Quite naturally, too, the young boy was familiar with the shoe industry as it existed in those days. Shoemakers were home workers — there were no large

factories. Labor conditions were free and easy; men worked or not, at their pleasure. There were no dependable standards, and the quality of the work varied with the quality of the workers.

Yet, even in



Old Closson factory at South Braintree, Mass., occupied by Rice & Hutchins, Inc., in 1896, for the manufacture of women's shoes. Discontinued on completion of the new factories at South Braintree.

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those days, men were groping about with a desire for organization, in the expression of which, however, they encountered difficulty. The idea had been conceived of bringing together a number of workmen under one roof, and a small shop was started in an old brick building located at Feltonville, then a part of Marlboro, afterward the town of Hudson. Later a wooden shop was erected close by—a building of about fifty by twenty-five feet.

Modern industry would call such an enterprise insignificant, but in those days, to quote Mr. Rice, "it was looked upon as a marvel of magnitude."

Shoe machinery was very crude, nor was there

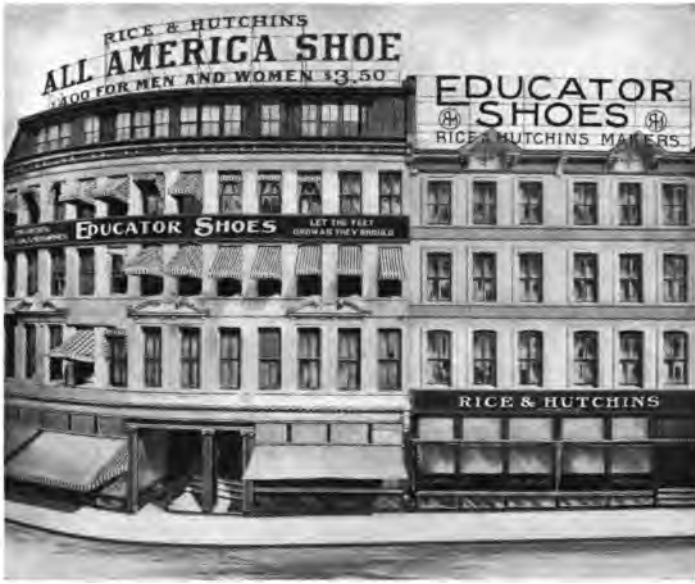
modern power with which to drive it. Mr. Rice has said that one of the great characters in the industry at Marlboro at that time was "Old General," who was the power that made the machinery in the new factory run. Har-  
nessed to a sweep, he threw his shoulders against the collar and did all that a horse could do to contribute



After old Middlesex factory was destroyed, this factory was built on the site and occupied by Rice & Hutchins in 1885. It was 80 x 40 feet, with an ell 56 x 28, and with its modern machinery was considered the best equipped factory in Marlboro. For several years this factory produced the Veal Calf Solids, on which Rice & Hutchins enjoyed splendid business. This was one of the earliest shoes made in America branded with a trade mark and the maker's name. It was widely known to the trade, and sold under one brand for nearly forty years. This factory was abandoned in 1902. It is occupied now by the Rice & Hutchins Paper Box Co.

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On the site of the present Rice building — offices of Rice & Hutchins, Inc., 6-20 High Street, Boston, occupied on removal from 125 Summer Street. Building at left was destroyed by fire in 1915 and building at right was razed following the fire.

to what was regarded as one of the greatest and most radical advances made in the shoe industry in that vicinity up to that time.

Of early education, Mr. Rice had merely what was offered in the common schools of those days. At the age of nine, we learn, he started at farm work, and his life from then on at farm work or in the shoe shop was one of industry, save for a brief period spent at the school. Yet Mr. Rice was one of those men who acquire and absorb education from every source with which they come in contact. He was always learning, and was ever alert for new ideas and the gaining of helpful knowledge. At the age of twenty he was

married to Miss Emma Louise Cunningham, daughter of a neighboring farmer. At twenty-six, when he founded the business of Rice & Hutchins, he was the father of two children.

But Mr. Rice was destined neither to farm work nor to a small place in the shoe-making industry. His



Temporary quarters of Rice & Hutchins, Inc., 22 High Street, Boston, occupied during erection of new Rice building, 1915-1916.

thoughts turned early to business — to trading with men and to the supplying of human wants. His first venture was the operation of a small fancy goods store on Hanover Street, Boston. Its existence was short. Profits were small, and the business promised little for the future. More-

over, he was not by nature a small shopkeeper — he was not satisfied with the breadth of opportunity offered him. Even then he had conceived the idea which was to make for his remarkable success in later years — the combination of manufacturing and selling. He had acquired an interest in a toy factory, and sold part of the product over the counter of his small store. He went even farther, and, as his own salesman, sold the toys which he produced to other dealers in nearby towns and in the Boston market.

Then came a break in his business career. In 1863, President Lincoln issued a call for volunteers for a hundred days' campaign. Mr. Rice retired from business and enlisted in Company E, of the Fifth Massachusetts Infantry, being commissioned a second lieutenant.

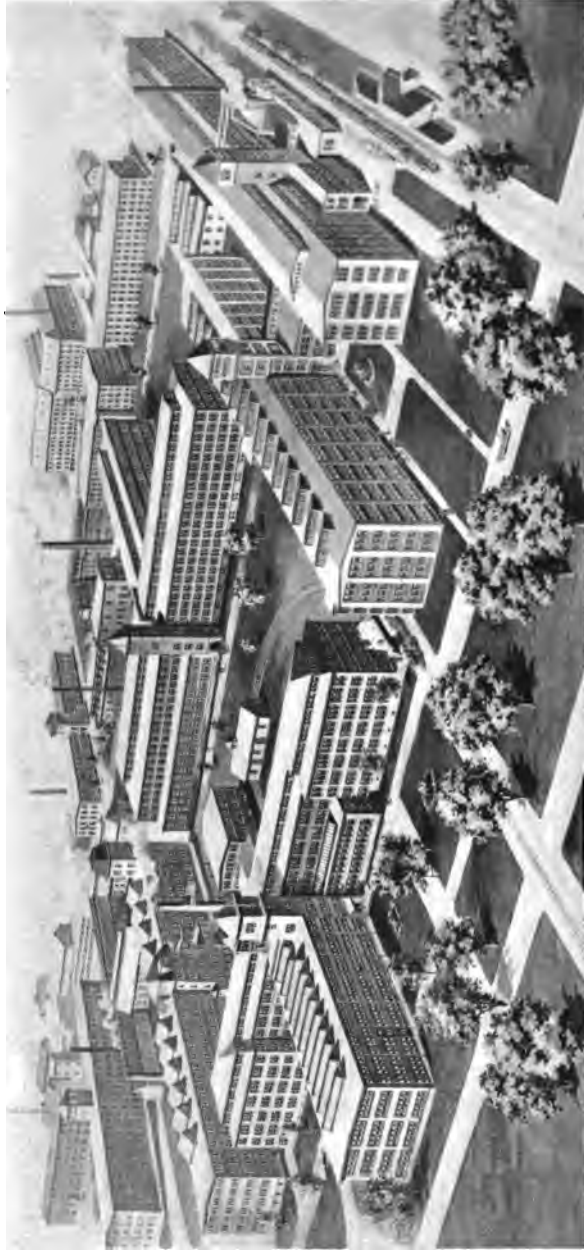
In the days following the close of the war, we find Mr. Rice returning to the industry for which, by nature, he seems to have been intended. He accepted a position as traveling salesman for L. T. Jeffs, shoe manufacturer. His success was marked, but this business connection was to last for only one year. During that time, his mind was busily engaged on the ideas which he was to work out later in the shoe industry—the development of a great shoe business of his own.

It was in October of the following year, 1866, that he made his start. With Mr. Hutchins, he opened an office at 30 Hanover Street, Boston, and entered the business of selling shoes on commission. Goods were received on consignment from Felton & Chipman, of Marlboro, operating the factory then and long afterward known as the Middlesex factory.

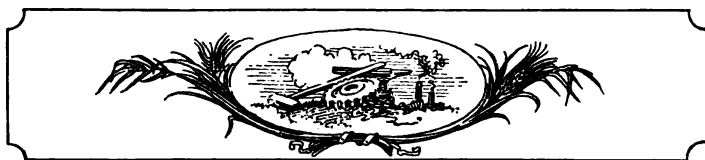


Where Summer, South, and High Streets, Boston, meet. View looking down High Street. New Rice building at the left.





Illustrating the growth and manufacturing facilities of Rice & Hutchins, Inc. The business was started on the output of one small factory. This picture shows how the Rice & Hutchins tanneries and factories would appear today if gathered together into one group.



## CHAPTER IV

**S**UCH was the modest and unpretentious origin of the present business of Rice & Hutchins, Inc., in the pioneer days of the great modern shoe industry. Its founders had no factories, no wide markets—merely a small office in Boston for the distribution of goods.

Yet, in its inception, too much importance cannot be attached to the fact that it was strictly a business of distribution, for it was in solving the problem of efficient distribution of their own product to all quarters of the globe that Rice & Hutchins were to obtain their greatest success and take their high rank in the shoe industry in the years to come. Nothing probably can illustrate to greatest degree the spirit of the opportunist in the make-up of William B. Rice. In the distribution of goods he studied the problems of greater distribution, of expanding the business in which he found himself placed. He dared to dream far beyond the knowledge and possibilities of his day; he lived to see his dreams materialize.

From the beginning, the business was destined to succeed. Its growth was to be gradual, but positive; its opportunities limitless. It started on borrowed capital of \$500. The real capital, however, was not a matter of dollars, but the energy and enthusiasm of two young men and their determination to succeed.

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Rice & Hutchins factory C, located at Rockland, Mass., and making men's high-grade shoes exclusively. This department was removed from North Easton to Rockland in 1894. Originally it had floor space of 36,320 square feet. Increasing demand for its product made necessary additions to the factory in 1898, 1900, 1910, and 1911. Factory C now has floor space of 120,000 square feet.

In the first year a business of \$113,000 was done, and from that time the business never stood still or fell back. Its history has been one of steady, unfaltering progress upward.

To do well the thing at hand was always a rule with Mr. Rice. To be thorough and to obtain the greatest possible advantage in every opportunity was one of his constant aims. He knew that expansion, to be on a firm foundation, must be based on a definite understanding of all the facts and conditions surrounding the shoe industry and trade in general, and must have in mind the fulfilment of human wants and desires. And for this reason the business remained in its early years entirely one of distribution. When the time for expansion came, the time when Rice & Hutchins were to operate their own factories, his plans for wider distribution had been thought out. The business then was ready for more rapid progress.

It must not be supposed that these were not years of struggle, sometimes of hardship, but never of despair.

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Rice & Hutchins factory A (Middlesex factory), Marlboro, Mass., making the heavier grades of men's shoes in welts and McKays. Its product was originally pegged and nailed work. This building was known formerly as the Cotting Avenue factory. It is one of the factories which the Curtis business outgrew. Middlesex factory business was moved to this building in 1902 and the factory name was changed from Cotting Avenue to Middlesex. This factory is 286 X 45 feet, five stories high.

It is interesting to note that neither the Boston fire in 1872, in which their store at 125 Summer Street was one of the first to go, nor the great financial panic of 1873 retarded the development. By nature, neither partner ever saw or admitted the possibility of failure. It was not in their make-up. In all that they did they built carefully, but with certainty. They always kept

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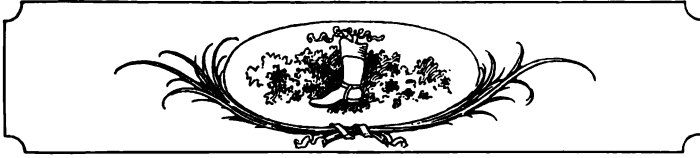
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within their means. Both partners lived frugally, paid as they went, and managed their finances in the most careful manner. If the business grew slowly, it grew surely and safely. Its credit was always of the highest.

Like Mr. Rice, Mr. Hutchins was tireless in his efforts for success. The good old Vermont stock from which he had come, his love of business, his skill in selling, his splendid personality, all played an important part in the steady development of the enterprise.



Rice & Hutchins factory D (Curtis factory), located at Marlboro, Mass., making men's medium-grade Goodyear welts exclusively. This factory had outgrown two previous locations when the new building was erected in 1901. Curtis factory is four stories high with basement. Its original dimensions were  $350 \times 54$  feet. In 1907, an addition  $133 \times 57$  feet was made.



## CHAPTER V

**D**URING these early years of the business it is certain that all of the dreams or visions of Mr. Rice were not confined merely to the making and distribution of shoes on a small scale. He went much farther than that. Bold beyond his times and strong enough to determine that his plans should be realized, he had in mind the day when Rice & Hutchins should manufacture shoes of enough varieties to supply whole



Rice & Hutchins factories G and K, located at South Braintree, Mass., and devoted exclusively to the manufacture of shoes for women — welts, turns, and McKays. Original factory (G) was built in 1902, 200 × 56 feet in dimension. An addition of 100 feet was made in 1907. Factory K was started in 1909. It is built of reinforced concrete, 256 × 48 feet, and is one of the most modern factories in the United States.

families, and should make these shoes easy to be obtained in all parts of the world, through a system of distributing houses centrally located.

Rice & Hutchins were in business nearly ten years before they purchased the factory of Felton & Chip-

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man, whose product they had handled originally on consignment. With this important step in the expansion of the business came many new and intricate problems, new cares and added responsibilities. But Mr. Rice had waited patiently until he was ready to assume them, and when he did, he proceeded on his well-laid plan to build up a manufacturing organization which to-day bears out all of his early hopes and ambitions.

Mr. Rice was a man of high ideals, but withal immensely practical, to both of which his record as a manufacturer testifies. In addition, he was a thorough organizer, and a keen judge of men and their qualifications. All of this was of importance to him in building up his great organization, step by step.



One of the most widely-known shoe factories in the United States is Rice & Hutchins factory N (Main Street factory), at Marlboro, Mass. This is the home of the Educator shoe for boys, misses, and children. Rice & Hutchins, Inc., began the manufacture of children's shoes in 1897. Main Street factory was acquired in 1900, and the first pair of Educator shoes was made there in 1903. This factory is devoted exclusively to shoes for boys, misses, and children.

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To serve the whole world with shoes was a great undertaking. To attempt such service with poor shoes would have resulted in miserable failure.

So, from the start, we find him insistent on quality and value in shoes. "There is no standing room," he said, "for men who try to thrive by selling poor stuff. For me, I do not believe that there ever was a time when consumers wanted cheap, poor stuff."

Again at the dedication of the Curtis factory in Marlboro, Mr. Rice said on the subject of quality, "There is always room for anything that is best. If the demand will absorb only two-thirds of the output of all the factories, it must be clear that only those who serve the world best by making the most perfect goods at a reasonable price can hope to be constantly employed. I believe that high quality is more important than low cost."

Emphasizing the importance of this point, particularly to the shoemakers themselves, he stated to some of his employees at one time that "the world



The present home of Jos. I. Meany & Co., Inc., pioneer among Rice & Hutchins distributing houses, is at 16-18 North Fifth Street, Philadelphia, Pa. This company serves the retail trade in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Southern New Jersey.



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In New York City, the Rice & Hutchins New York Co. carries an immense wholesale stock of Rice & Hutchins product at 129-135 Duane Street, distributing to the retailers of the Metropolitan district, the Hudson Valley, and parts of Connecticut, New Jersey, and Northeastern Pennsylvania.

will pay for its wants, and it always wants the best. It is to the interest of every workman to watch every process that comes under his eye, and particularly all that passes through his hands, and see that the job is always well done with the material in hand. When once it is known that this factory in every detail turns out perfect work, it will always be fully

employed, whatever the state of business. And when this is true, you may be sure that we will make it known to every dealer the world over."

It was not only in the quality of the product itself that he demanded a high standard. In the matter of equipment he was equally insistent. "We must have," he said, "the most perfect equipment—the latest style and perfect fitting lasts and patterns. We must in every respect be in the front ranks in all our methods. Then we must get the best results from equipment."

As one factory after another was acquired, Mr. Rice showed with equal clearness how thoroughly his plans

for world dominance in the shoe industry had been laid. He made no attempt to assemble all of the factories at one point, having no faith in such a plan. "Shoes will be made," he said in this connection, "where there is the best machinery, worked by the most intelligent labor, under the most favorable conditions for large output, and you cannot prevent this any more than you can stop the winds blowing."

No part of his plan showed greater wisdom, for it meant standardization of Rice & Hutchins products and the best possible products that could be made at given prices. It was a most radical departure from old methods, however, for shoe factories of the early days, particularly those of Europe, were accustomed to make shoes of many grades for men, women, and children all in the same factory and with the same labor.

To this original plan of Mr. Rice, there has been rigid adherence. Rice & Hutchins shoes today are made in several factories in different parts of Massachusetts — each grade being made in a community where workers have been trained to specialize in making that particular



The Atlas Shoe Co., wholesale distributor of Rice & Hutchins shoes for New England and part of New York State, is located at 614 Atlantic Avenue, Boston, directly opposite the South Station.



Home of the Rice & Hutchins Chicago Co., West Monroe and Franklin Streets, Chicago, Ill. Wholesale stocks of Rice & Hutchins shoes are distributed from this house to the retail trade in the Middle Western, Northwestern, and far Western States, Alaska, and Western Canada.

grade of shoe. High-priced, medium-priced, and low-priced shoes never are made in the same factory. Men's, women's, and children's shoes all are made in their own particular places.

In connection with factory organization and expansion, an interesting chapter could be written on the way Mr. Rice took up the labor question.

It was not an easy problem, for we have seen that in those early years factory organization was unknown, and shoemakers did their work in their own homes. Yet he did build up an efficient organization, and he based it largely on the common sense of the workmen themselves. He dealt with them as men and as a most important part of the business. He told them frankly how much depended on them and how much they could rightfully expect in return. He sought and obtained their cooperation.

He said to his men on one occasion: "The first duty of a business manager is so to conduct his affairs

that he will always be able to pay his debts — make good every promise. However pleasant it might be temporarily to go on promising to do things that the business will not warrant — large wages, free and easy conditions, etc. — sooner or later such business comes to grief. That enterprise is most valuable in any community that is conducted on such just and reasonable and safe lines as to grow stronger and stronger in the confidence of the people. It is the policy of Rice & Hutchins to pay as high wages as are paid for similar work elsewhere.

“Of course,” he said, “it is right for you to want all that you can fairly get. The whole business and social structure of the world is based on the desire to get more, and a factory of workmen who never wanted more or would never accept less when the conditions made it, just would be an utter failure.”

Of the necessity for strict organization he once told his employees that “if a business is to exist, it must conform to modern methods,



Headquarters of the Rice & Hutchins Baltimore Co. are located at 101 Hopkins Place, Baltimore, Md., in the district swept by the great fire of 1904. This company distributes Rice & Hutchins shoes to the retail trade in Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and the Carolinas.

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Complete wholesale stocks of Rice & Hutchins shoes for some of the Middle Western, Southwestern, and Gulf States are carried by the Rice & Hutchins St. Louis Shoe Co., located at 1021-1025 Washington Avenue, St. Louis, Mo.

where every individual becomes a part of the whole, a link in a chain, a piece of a vast machine, each part depending on every other. If one part is weak and breaks or even bends, the whole is disastrously affected. Therefore it is necessary for the good of the whole that proper and just, even though they may be stringent, rules for the conduct of a large aggregation of work-

men shall be enforced." Coöperation throughout the factories was most essential, he insisted. "After all is said and done," he declared, "every machine in motion and every workman in his place, there must be peace and good will everywhere. War is always destructive. It never builds up. Its object is to destroy. I never knew anything gained by industrial war that could not be gained at a hundred times less cost by peaceful methods. Not only must there be no outbreaks, but there must be mutual good will, so that every person engaged in any one of our factories shall have its prosperity at heart and be ready to do his or her part earnestly to gain it.

“A business cannot live when any number of its workmen feel that their interests are separate from their employers’, and that to protect themselves they must join together to oppose their employers and hamper the business, reduce the output of the factories, shut out improved machinery, and in every way make success difficult. Of course, anything like this is fatal to success.

“We are ready at all times to discuss anything that troubles you, either individually or through committees from your number. We want to correct everything wrong in the very beginning.

“We care not where you were born, or with what church or political party or organization of any sort you affiliate.

“We shall believe in you and treat you as honorable and just men and women, and pay you fairly and promptly for work performed. And in return we shall expect your loyal and hearty good will, to stand by us in every right effort to make our factories hum with life and prosperity.”



Rice & Hutchins shoes are distributed to the retail trade of Southern Ohio, Southern Indiana, Kentucky, and Tennessee by the Rice & Hutchins Cincinnati Co., located at Third and Race Streets, Cincinnati, Ohio.



## CHAPTER VI

**N**EARLY twenty years of zeal and energy had passed before Mr. Rice was certain that the time had come for the realization of his dreams. It was, to be exact, the year 1884 when the present system of Rice & Hutchins distributing houses was inaugurated. The first of these was the house of Joseph I. Meany & Co., of Philadelphia, and it is interesting to

note in passing that Mr. Joseph I. Meany, of that company, has been associated continuously with Rice & Hutchins since that time—a period covering thirty-two years.

The wait had been an impatient one, but one dictated by good judgment and one of faithful attention to every detail necessary to assure development and success of the plan when put into operation. The factories, or as many of them as had



From its beautiful new home at 88-90 Pryor Street, Atlanta, Ga., the Rice & Hutchins Atlanta Co. distributes wholesale stocks of Rice & Hutchins product to the retail trade of Georgia, Florida, and Alabama.

been acquired up to that time, were efficient; their product was a known standard. The question of merchandise had been settled. Rice & Hutchins were ready now to offer also the maximum of that second great business-building factor — service.

Just as, during his early years, Mr. Rice had planned for great and efficient factories, so, during these years and the years of factory expansion which followed, he had given a great degree of attention and study to the formulation of a sales policy which should open to Rice & Hutchins the markets of the world. He determined to accomplish three things:

*First*—To get Rice & Hutchins shoes under Rice & Hutchins trade marks into the hands of retailers all over the world.

*Second*—To give the retailers maximum service through a chain of distributing houses in the principal market centers.

*Third*—To assist retailers and create a permanent market for Rice & Hutchins shoes through the medium of judicious advertising.

In other words, Mr. Rice determined that Rice & Hutchins named shoes should become known as



The Rice & Hutchins Cleveland Co. occupies this building at 1392 West Sixth Street, Cleveland, Ohio. The retail trade of northern Ohio and western Pennsylvania is served by this company.



standards of value among retailers and consumers the world over. This was something totally different from what had been the rule in former days, when the shoe business had not been standardized on world-known brands. He realized that for a manufacturer to brand his shoes would mean for him to accept responsibility to the consumer for quality of the product, but he also saw that having accepted such responsibility, with satisfactory merchandise, the result would be increased



Bronx store of the Signet Shoe Co., Third Avenue and 149th Street, New York City, selling Rice & Hutchins shoes exclusively.

public demand for Rice & Hutchins shoes and, therefore, increased business.

It was such a plan as few men had dreamed in those early days. It was a plan of impossibilities to many; in the mind of William B. Rice it was both practical and real.

As in the acquisition of factories, so in the development of these distributing houses, every step was taken carefully and after mature deliberation. Whatever was to be done in the direction of progress must be permanent. Yet progress was steady. One distributing center after another was opened, until today Rice & Hutchins have such houses, carrying a complete stock of their own products in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, St. Louis, Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Atlanta.

In pursuance of this policy, Mr. Rice invaded the field which up to this time had belonged to the jobber

## A RETROSPECT

—a field in which he found many abuses, as referred to in earlier chapters. In doing so he had no quarrel with the jobber, for as he stated on one occasion when addressing the New England Shoe and Leather Association, “there will always be a place in the world for the good jobber, but no place for the jobber who tries to prosper at the expense of both manufacturer and retailer.”

Mr. Rice, in his plan for distributing Rice & Hutchins shoes, had foreseen the value of service to retailers as a factor in building up the business. To make it easy for retailers to obtain Rice & Hutchins trade-marked shoes in such quantities as were needed from time to time would encourage the buying of these lines and produce wider distribution. Moreover,



In the heart of Brooklyn's shopping district—Fulton Street store of the Signet Shoe Co., selling Rice & Hutchins shoes exclusively.



Harlem store of the Signet Shoe Co., 112 West 125th Street, New York City, selling Rice & Hutchins shoes exclusively.

he knew that such a system of buying would make of the retailer a more successful business man. Closer contact between manufacturer and retailer, which such a system would promote, would be of benefit also in a better understanding of the kinds

or styles of shoes required in different sections. The factories were equipped to produce any shoes for which

there was demand, and Mr. Rice wanted to give to all parts of the world the shoes which they wanted, and for which he had confidence that they would pay.



One of the most beautiful shoe stores in Boston is Willson's Shoe Shop, located at 388 Washington Street, in the heart of the city's retail district. This store is devoted entirely to the Rice & Hutchins lines.

That his judgment was sound and his faith in people not misplaced is evidenced by the magnitude of the present business and the thoroughness with which his plans have been developed and have accomplished that for which they were intended. The importance to the trade at large of this plan of distributing houses cannot be emphasized too strongly. Each house stands as a separate unit of the organization, responsible for service to all of the trade within its given territory. From each, a large corps of salesmen is sent out, reaching into the most remote corners of the territory, offering to retailers complete lines of New England made shoes for the entire family, and styles which they can buy with safety and sell with profit.

In the matter of styles alone, the idea of William B. Rice has been of vast service to the large and small retailers wherever Rice & Hutchins operate. Through

accomplished that for which they were intended. The importance to the trade at large of this plan of distributing houses cannot be emphasized too strongly. Each house stands as a separate unit of the organization, responsible for service to all of the trade within its given territory. From each, a large corps of salesmen is sent out, reaching into the most remote corners of the territory, offering to retailers complete lines of New England made shoes for the entire family, and styles which they can buy with safety and sell with profit.



All America Shoe Shop at 66 Summer Street, Boston, retailing the Rice & Hutchins lines exclusively.

the medium of its distributing organization, Rice & Hutchins are in the closest possible touch with style tendencies all over the world. Regularly, the managers of these distributing houses gather at the central offices in Boston, bringing with them reports and observations of the general trend in lasts, patterns, and materials, as reflected in orders, reports from salesmen, requests

from retailers, and conditions in the market centers in which these houses are located. There follows, naturally, interchange of opinion, discussion and, finally, determination on those styles which Rice & Hutchins know, as nearly as anything can be known in this direction, will prove salable with the trade at large. The peculiar requirements of certain sections



In the Tremont building, immediately adjoining the old Granary burying ground, Tremont Street, Boston, stands this All America Shoe Shop, selling Rice & Hutchins shoes exclusively.



Salem, Mass.—All America Shoe Shop, retailing Rice & Hutchins shoes exclusively.

also are noted and provision made to meet this need.

Were this the only beneficial feature of this system of distributing Rice & Hutchins shoes, results would be important, yet it is but one feature which has made for the positive value of these houses. Of greater importance to the retail trade is the fact that Rice & Hutchins, having

## A RETROSPECT

decided on these styles, make the shoes in large quantities and place them in stock in their distributing houses. To the retailer buying manufacturers' lines, who in former days had to buy in large quantities, with attendant heavy investment, this feature has proved a boon.



Atlanta, Ga.—Signet Shoe Shop, retailing Rice & Hutchins shoes exclusively.

In fact, the day is surely passing when retailers at large are content to buy the great bulk of their goods twice a year. They have found it to their advantage and profit to buy moderately and turn capital more often, to keep their stocks clean and salable, well knowing that the old risks attendant on large stocks and frequently changing styles only tended toward failure. And furthermore, they know that goods as needed can be obtained from these distributing houses at a minimum rate for transportation.

Such close contact between Rice & Hutchins, Inc., and the retail trade, through the distributing houses, naturally facilitates matters of credit and collection, to the advantage of both retailer and manufacturer. The system brings the two into more personal and sympathetic relation.



Berlin, Germany (Friedrichstrasse)—The American Shoe Stores, former headquarters of the Vera shoe, so widely known in Europe.

## A RETROSPECT

All of this was foreseen in the plan of William B. Rice. He was a great friend of the retailer, particularly of the retailer who tried to give service to his trade. He once said that "the retailer who has the enterprise and ability to understand the needs of the community in which he is established, who has the artistic taste to select the right styles, the eye to make the right fit, and the



Berlin, Germany (Leipzigerstrasse)—Retail store of Vera American Shoe Co., selling the Vera shoe made by Rice & Hutchins, Inc.



Dresden, Germany—Retail store of Vera American Shoe Co., selling the Vera shoe made by Rice & Hutchins, Inc.

knowledge and experience to make sure of the best quality, and above all, the industry and temperament necessary to cater to individual wants, will always command the trade of his neighborhood."

And to assist this class of retailer was the object in mind with William B. Rice as he developed his remarkable plans.



## CHAPTER VII

**D**EVELOPMENT of the world markets has kept pace with expansion within the United States, a part of the original plan of Mr. Rice. There again new problems have been met and mastered, and there, too, progress has been steady because the foundations for it were well laid. The policy of distribution is similar to that in the United States. The service to retailers follows the same lines.

The Vera American Shoe Company, the greatest foreign distributing house of Rice & Hutchins, Inc., until the outbreak of the present European war was located in Berlin. From that house salesmen traveled eastern continental Europe and parts of Asia so



Cologne, Germany—Retail store of Vera American Shoe Co., selling the Vera shoe made by Rice & Hutchins, Inc.

thoroughly that a Rice & Hutchins salesman and his line were seen in Berlin, Vienna, Moscow, or Vladivostok just as in all sections of the United States, the great difference being in the styles of shoes which he carried. There were also retail stores in Berlin, Cologne, and Dresden,

as well as in Rome and in Milan, Italy.

In the Fall of 1914, a new corporation was formed

at Copenhagen, under the Danish laws, called A/S Vera American Shoe Company, to serve as a distributing house for the Vera shoe.

Similarly, a wholesale stock adapted to the British Isles is carried in London, and the Signet Shoe Company, a subsidiary, has several retail stores in London and Manchester.

At Buenos Aires, the Rice & Hutchins South America Company has a fine retail store, together with a wholesale stock, and from this city salesmen cover the entire southern part of South America.

Rice & Hutchins offices are maintained in Manila, and from here salesmen go all over the Philippine Islands and the oriental countries.

For many years, Rice & Hutchins shoes have been distributed widely in South Africa and Australia. In Canada, Mexico, Alaska, Central America, Panama, and the West Indies the

branded lines of Rice & Hutchins are well established.

One very important department of the business at



Moscow, Russia—Retail store of Vera American Shoe Co., selling the Vera shoe made by Rice & Hutchins, Inc.



Crakow, Russia—Retail store of Vera American Shoe Co., selling the Vera shoe made by Rice & Hutchins, Inc.



## A RETROSPECT

the present time has full charge of the company's foreign trade. In the promotion of that business,



Rome, Italy—Retail store of Vera American Shoe Co., selling the Vera shoe made by Rice & Hutchins, Inc.

Rice & Hutchins, Inc., hold to the same fundamental policies as laid down by William B. Rice. Success in this field is due to unceasing effort to give these countries the kinds and styles of shoes for which they furnish a market.

William B. Rice lived to see the fulfilment of his dream, but not on the vast scale, on which the company operates today. He was overtaken by his last illness and forced to relinquish many of his former activities in 1905, though keeping up his interest and, as he said, "playing the game for all it is worth," so far as his strength would permit, up to his death in 1909. Mr. Hutchins had retired in 1885, before the maturity of these plans, and died in 1890.

But with the retirement of Mr. Rice there was no change in the general plan or policy of the business, and it is needless to say that Rice & Hutchins, Inc., never have lowered their selling standards.

The only changes that have been made since the departure of Mr. Rice are in the way of perfecting the



Milan, Italy—Retail store of Vera American Shoe Co., selling the Vera shoe made by Rice & Hutchins, Inc.

## A RETROSPECT

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system which he created. The men who now control the destinies of Rice & Hutchins, Inc., all of them, grew up under his eye. They still maintain that loyalty to his memory and consistency in maintaining those sound principles on which the business was founded. It is their hope, as it was that of the founder, that Rice & Hutchins, Inc., year by year may render increased service to the retailer, thus realizing the dream of Mr. Rice to create a business which would be dominant internationally.



London, Eng. (Brompton Road and Sloane Street) — Retail store of Signet Shoe Co., selling Rice & Hutchins shoes.



## CHAPTER VIII



WORLD shoemakers for the whole family! Such was the vision, the inspiration, the hope of William B. Rice. To this end, his whole thought and his energy were applied. And this spirit of internationalism, of world-wideness in business activity, of which he was the embodiment, animates the business which is today the living expression of his personality. It is not limited by the boundary lines of nations, but in most civilized countries, Rice & Hutchins products and Rice & Hutchins representatives will be found. The vision of the founder has become reality.

Fifty years have passed since the business of Rice & Hutchins was started in so unpretentious a way. They have been years both of promise and of fulfilment. They have witnessed a remarkable development of the ideas possessed by a single man, and bear testimony to a success based on his ideals of good merchandise, efficient service, and fair treatment to merchants the



London, Eng. (Oxford Street)—Retail store of Signet Shoe Co., selling Rice & Hutchins shoes.

world over. Efficient service has been possible only by strict adherence to the principle of efficient organi-

zation. Side by side with the development of the world market has grown an organization of large proportions to provide and care for it.

Today the central organization of Rice & Hutchins, Inc., controlling all the various ramifications of the business, is housed in the beautiful new Rice building, located on High Street, Boston.

From this center the arteries of the business run out in every direction, encircling the globe.

Rice & Hutchins, Inc., make much of their leather in tanneries which they either own or control.

Seven Rice & Hutchins factories, each of them highly specialized, each under the supervision of a separate superintendent, who, in some cases, is also a director, are in constant motion making shoes for

world-wide distribution. Three of these are devoted to men's, two to women's, and two to children's shoes. Rice & Hutchins distributing houses and offices are located in all quarters of the world.

As one means of efficient and helpful service to the

retail trade all over the world, there is maintained in the central offices at Boston a highly organized



London, Eng. (Cheapside)—Retail store of Signet Shoe Co., selling Rice & Hutchins shoes.



Manchester, Eng.—Retail store of Signet Shoe Co., selling Rice & Hutchins shoes.

## A RETROSPECT

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At the gateway of the world's greatest shoe and leather market — the new Rice building, located at No. 10 High Street, Boston, and completed in 1916. One of the most modern and completely equipped office buildings in Boston, in which are located all of the executive offices of Rice & Hutchins, Inc.

publicity and service department for the promotion of sales on Rice & Hutchins trade-marked shoes. Of these branded shoes, undoubtedly the best known is the Educator line, the importance of which in the retail trade and the knowledge of which among consumers the world over are deserving of particular notice. In the world market today, the Educator line probably is the only one which is made and sold for the whole family—men, women, boys, and children—standardized on one last, carefully designed to let the foot grow as nature intended.



London, Eng. (Strand)—Retail store of Signet Shoe Co., selling Rice & Hutchins shoes.

Fifty years of adherence to the principles of business as laid down by William B. Rice have brought Rice & Hutchins, Inc., to their present place of prominence in the business activities of the world. The business is still young and growing. New and greater markets are opening constantly. With expansion and further development, new problems must be met. No effort will be spared to meet them with the unconquerable spirit of William B.



Manila, P. I. — Office of Rice & Hutchins, Inc.

## A RETROSPECT

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Rice, who recognized no limits to possibilities except those self-imposed—a spirit which lives today in every fiber of the organization. His was indeed a master business mind.



Buenos Aires, Argentina—Retail store of the Rice & Hutchins South America Co. Wholesale stocks of Rice & Hutchins shoes also are carried by this company and distributed in several of the South American countries.



## CHRONOLOGY

- 1866—Birth of Rice & Hutchins—Location of office at 30 Hanover Street, Boston, Mass.
- 1868—Removal of Rice & Hutchins offices from 30 Hanover Street to 95 Pearl Street, Boston.
- 1872—Removal of Rice & Hutchins offices from 95 Pearl Street to 125 Summer Street, Boston.
- 1872—Great Boston fire—Rice & Hutchins offices at 125 Summer Street destroyed.
- 1872—Temporary offices of Rice & Hutchins, Boston, located at Columbia and Bedford Streets.
- 1874—Rice & Hutchins move back to new offices and stock-rooms at 125 Summer Street.
- 1875—Purchase of the old Middlesex factory at Marlboro, Mass., and manufacture of men's medium-price balmoral and congress boots and women's polish boots.
- 1875—Lease of Warren factory, Warren, Me. Manufacture of women's polkas, followed successively by men's work shoes, bicycle shoes, and men's low-priced machine-sewed shoes.
- 1876—Lease of Rockland factory, Rockland, Me., and manufacture of men's brogans, plow shoes and boots.
- 1879—High Street factory, Marlboro, Mass., started. Men's, boys', and youths' machine-sewed shoes.
- 1879—Addition made to Middlesex factory, Marlboro, Mass.
- 1879—Two additions made to High Street factory, Marlboro, Mass.
- 1879—Erection of factory, Troy Street, Boston, Mass.
- 1880—Removal of the Rockland, Me., business to Troy Street factory, Boston, Mass., and making of men's fine shoes in part of factory.
- 1882—Warren factory, Warren, Me., destroyed by fire.



## A RETROSPECT

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- 1882—Warren factory, Warren, Me., business transferred to Marlboro, Mass., during reconstruction.
- 1882—Removal of Rockland factory buildings from Rockland, Me., and re-erection in Warren, Me.
- 1884—Middlesex factory, Marlboro, Mass., destroyed by fire.
- 1884—Establishment at Philadelphia of first distributing house, known as Joseph I. Meany & Co.
- 1885—Retirement of Mr. Horatio H. Hutchins from firm.
- 1885—Completion of new Middlesex factory, Marlboro, Mass.
- 1886—Removal of men's fine shoemaking department from Troy Street factory, Boston, to factory at North Easton, Mass.
- 1886—Erection of Curtis factory, Cotting Avenue, Marlboro, Mass., to supersede High Street factory.
- 1887-89—Operation of men's fine calf boot factory at Quincy, Mass.
- 1888—Establishment of New York distributing house, then known as The Manhattan Shoe Company.
- 1889—Establishment of Baltimore distributing house, then known as the Chesapeake Shoe Company.
- 1892—Rice & Hutchins incorporated under the laws of New Jersey.
- 1892—Establishment of Chicago distributing house, then known as the Continent Shoe Company.
- 1892—Establishment of Cincinnati distributing house, then known as the Ohio Valley Shoe Company.
- 1893—Rice & Hutchins shoes introduced to English market through a London house.
- 1893—Addition made to Cotting Avenue factory, Marlboro, Mass.
- 1893—Operation of factory at Yonkers, N. Y., for manufacture of women's fine shoes.
- 1894—Purchase of factory building at Rockland, Mass., and removal of men's fine shoemaking from North Easton, Mass., to Rockland, Mass.
- 1895—Troy Street factory, Boston, Mass., discontinued.
- 1895—Men's medium-price and heavy shoe manufacturing transferred from Troy Street, Boston, to Kennebunk, Me.

## A RETROSPECT

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- 1895—Removal of business from factory at Yonkers, N. Y., to Lynn, Mass.
- 1896—Operation of Closson factory, South Braintree, Mass., for manufacture of men's and women's fine shoes.
- 1897—Established factory in Marlboro, Mass., for manufacture of misses', boys', children's, and infants' shoes.
- 1898—Addition made to Rockland factory, Rockland, Mass.
- 1898—Establishment of St. Louis distributing house, then known as the St. Louis Shoe Company.
- 1898—Establishment of New England distributing house,—The Atlas Shoe Company.
- 1900—Removal of Rice & Hutchins Boston headquarters from 125 Summer Street to 10 High Street.
- 1900—Removal of misses', boys', children's, and infants' departments from Howe Court to Main Street factory, Marlboro, Mass.
- 1900—Addition made to Rockland factory, Rockland, Mass.
- 1901—Erection of new Curtis factory, Howe Street, Marlboro, Mass.
- 1902—Erection of first women's factory in South Braintree, Mass., and removal from first Closson factory of women's shoe manufacturing.
- 1902—Old Middlesex factory, Marlboro, Mass., discontinued. New Middlesex factory, formerly Curtis factory, Cotting Avenue, Marlboro, Mass., operated as men's low-price shoe factory.
- 1902—Addition made to South Braintree factory, South Braintree, Mass.
- 1903—First pair of Educator shoes made in Main Street factory, Marlboro, Mass.
- 1903—Vera American Shoe Company, Berlin, Germany, established.
- 1904—Factory at Kennebunk, Me., discontinued.
- 1905—Rice & Hutchins reorganized and incorporated under Maine laws.
- 1907—Addition made to South Braintree factory, South Braintree, Mass.
- 1907—Addition made to Curtis factory, Marlboro, Mass.
- 1907—Addition made to new Middlesex factory, Marlboro, Mass.

## A RETROSPECT

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- 1908—Establishment of Cleveland distributing house, The Rice & Hutchins Cleveland Company.
- 1909—Erection of second factory (women's) in South Braintree.
- 1909—Death of Mr. William B. Rice.
- 1910—Removal of Rice & Hutchins Boston offices to 20 High Street, Boston, Mass.
- 1910—Old Middlesex factory converted into paper box factory.
- 1910—Establishment of Atlanta distributing house, The Rice & Hutchins Atlanta Company.
- 1910—Chesapeake Shoe Company reorganized and incorporated as The Rice & Hutchins Baltimore Company.
- 1910—St. Louis Shoe Company reorganized and incorporated as The Rice & Hutchins St. Louis Shoe Company.
- 1910—The Manhattan Shoe Company reorganized and incorporated as The Rice & Hutchins New York Company.
- 1910—The Continent Shoe Company reorganized and incorporated as The Rice & Hutchins Chicago Company.
- 1911—Addition made to Rockland factory, Rockland, Mass.
- 1912—The Ohio Valley Shoe Company reorganized and incorporated as The Rice & Hutchins Cincinnati Company.
- 1914—Rice & Hutchins South America Company at Buenos Aires, Argentina, South America, established.
- 1914—Vera American Shoe Company, Copenhagen, Denmark, established.
- 1915—Rice & Hutchins Boston offices damaged by fire. Offices moved to temporary quarters at 22 High Street, and old building demolished.
- 1916—Operation of factory at Marblehead, Mass., for manufacture of infants' turned-sole shoes.
- 1916—Removal of main offices to new quarters in the new Rice building, which covers numbers 2 to 20 High Street, Boston, Mass.
- 1916—October—Rice & Hutchins celebrate the 50th anniversary of their birth.



## RICE & HUTCHINS, INC.

HARRY L. RICE, *President*

FRED B. RICE, *Vice-President*

JOSEPH A. DASHA, *Sec. and Treas.*

### *Board of Directors*

HARRY L. RICE

FRED B. RICE

JOSEPH A. DASHA

FRANK D. ELLISON

CHARLES HUTCHINS

CHARLES W. CURTIS

JOHN M. CONNELL

FRANK A. PAGE

STEPHEN E. YOUNG

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### *Factories*

CURTIS FACTORY, Marlboro, Mass.

C. W. Curtis, *Superintendent*

ROCKLAND FACTORY, Rockland, Mass.

Charles Hutchins, *Superintendent*

MAIN ST. FACTORY, Marlboro, Mass.

D. B. Aldoes, *Superintendent*

MIDDLESEX FACTORY, Marlboro, Mass.

C. B. Eager, *Superintendent*

SOUTH BRAINTREE FACTORIES, South Braintree, Mass.

J. M. Connell, *Superintendent*

MARBLEHEAD FACTORY, Marblehead, Mass.

W. J. Clarke, *Superintendent*

## A RETROSPECT

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### *Wholesale Houses*

- JOSEPH I. MEANY & Co., Inc., Philadelphia, Pa.  
Joseph I. Meany, *President and Manager*
- THE RICE & HUTCHINS NEW YORK Co., New York, N. Y.  
T. M. Brown, *President and Manager*
- THE RICE & HUTCHINS BALTIMORE Co., Baltimore, Md.  
F. J. La Motte, *Treasurer and Manager*
- THE RICE & HUTCHINS CHICAGO Co., Chicago, Ill.  
W. G. Colvin, *Treasurer and Manager*  
J. L. Proctor, *Secretary*
- THE RICE & HUTCHINS CINCINNATI Co., Cincinnati, Ohio  
M. E. Jackson, *Vice-President and Manager*
- THE RICE & HUTCHINS ST. LOUIS SHOE Co., St. Louis, Mo.  
T. G. Morfit, *President and Manager*
- THE ATLAS SHOE Co., Boston, Mass.  
E. P. Tuttle, *Vice-President and Manager*
- THE RICE & HUTCHINS CLEVELAND Co., Cleveland, Ohio  
W. T. Francis, *Treasurer and Manager*
- THE RICE & HUTCHINS ATLANTA Co., Atlanta, Ga.  
E. G. Thomas, *President and Manager*
- A/S VERA AMERICAN SHOE Co., Copenhagen, Denmark  
John George Simon, *President and Manager*
- MULLEN SHOE Co., Pittsburg, Pa.  
M. J. Mullen, *President*
- SIGNET SHOE Co., London, Eng.  
W. W. Mason, *Manager*
- THE RICE & HUTCHINS SO. AMERICA Co.  
Buenos Aires, Argentina, S. A.  
Martin Christiansen, *Manager*
- WHOLESALE OFFICE, Manila, P. I.  
Jacob Rosenthal, *Manager*
- 

### *Tanneries*

- Peabody, Mass.      Stoneham, Mass.      Newark, N. J.

















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